**Beyond Domestic Incrementalism: Israel Lobby Networks, Christian Zionism, and the Multi-Layered Architecture of Executive Power Consolidation**

Douglas C. Youvan

doug@youvan.com www.youvan.ai June 22, 2026

The op-ed by former Democratic leaders Richard Gephardt and Timothy Wirth presents a sharply drawn warning of a "rolling coup" underway through incremental domestic measures: a National Security Presidential Memorandum targeting ideological and funding networks, expanded detention infrastructure, pursuit of voter data, shifts in military legal oversight, and the latent threat of President's Emergency Action Documents activated under a declared national crisis. While the piece usefully highlights how security and law-enforcement language can mask the aggregation of executive authority, its exclusive domestic frame leaves critical layers unexamined. In particular, it omits the longstanding and evolving role of pro-Israel lobbying networks, including AIPAC and aligned PACs, the theological infrastructure of dispensationalist and Christian Zionist thought that shapes significant segments of American political support for Israel policy, and the deeper intersections of intelligence cooperation, donor alignment, and definitional power over "terrorism" and "emergency." These factors do not operate in isolation from domestic enforcement tools; they help constitute the broader architecture within which such tools are legitimized, funded, and directed. This paper corrects the omission by mapping a multi-domain pattern that integrates public lobbying, theological currents, historical intelligence ties, and informational substrates of power. It argues that any analysis claiming to reveal the full construct of contemporary executive consolidation must account for these overlapping networks rather than treating the domestic security apparatus as self-contained. By doing so, the paper offers a more complete diagnostic for understanding both the mechanisms at work and the forms of resistance or reform that might prove effective.

Keywords: rolling coup, Israel lobby, AIPAC, Christian Zionism, dispensationalism, executive power consolidation, emergency action documents, PEADs, influence networks, geopolitical theology, informational substrate, Centaur Intelligence, domestic terrorism policy, voter integrity, multi-layered architecture.

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**Outline**

**1. The Op-Ed's Domestic Framing and Its Analytical Limits** Examine the structure and rhetorical strategy of the Gephardt-Wirth memo, its reliance on incremental domestic mechanisms, and the consequences of excluding foreign-policy and theological domains from the model of power it constructs.

**2. Historical Continuity of US-Israel Strategic Alignment** Trace the bipartisan foundations of the US-Israel relationship from the post-1948 period through the Cold War and into the present, showing how strategic, intelligence, and domestic political factors created durable channels that later intersect with contemporary domestic security policy.

**3. Mechanisms of Pro-Israel Lobby Influence** Detail the operational tools of AIPAC and affiliated PACs—campaign contributions, access, framing of legislation, and primary challenges—while distinguishing legitimate advocacy from claims of singular control, and locate these tools within the wider ecology of donor and policy networks.

**4. Dispensationalist Theology and Christian Zionism as Political Infrastructure** Analyze how interpretive frameworks originating with Darby and popularized through Scofield and subsequent media have produced enduring political constituencies that treat modern Israel policy as eschatologically significant, thereby shaping coalition dynamics and threat perceptions inside the United States.

**5. Intelligence Cooperation and Definitional Power** Explore historical and ongoing US-Israel intelligence sharing, joint threat designations, and the migration of concepts such as "terrorism" and "foreign agent" across domestic and international domains, and assess how these shape the operational environment for measures like NPSM-7.

**6. Intersections Between Foreign-Policy Alignments and Domestic Enforcement Tools** Map concrete points of contact where Israel-related policy priorities, donor networks, and definitional authority over political violence or emergency conditions influence or legitimate domestic instruments such as detention expansion, data access, and counter-network operations.

**7. The Authors' Positionality and the Politics of Omission** Situate Gephardt and Wirth within the generational Democratic consensus on Israel, contrast it with more recent progressive critiques, and analyze how that positionality produces a narrative that brackets certain influence channels while foregrounding others.

**8. Informational and Consciousness Substrates of Institutional Power** Introduce a non-materialist lens in which power architectures are understood as resonant informational patterns rather than solely institutional or material arrangements, and show how this reframing alters the significance assigned to theological and lobby networks.

**9. Voter Data, Election Integrity, and Cross-Domain Pressure Points** Examine efforts to access and cleanse voter rolls alongside parallel debates over citizenship verification and foreign influence, assessing whether these domains reveal hidden couplings between domestic administrative action and external alignment pressures.

**10. Emergency Powers, PEADs, and the Latent Architecture** Review the historical development and classified character of Presidential Emergency Action Documents, evaluate the conditions under which they might be invoked, and consider how theological or lobby-mediated threat narratives could supply the justificatory frame for activation.

**11. Toward a Recursive Model of Power Architecture** Synthesize the preceding domains into a multi-layered, feedback-rich model that treats domestic security tools, lobby networks, theological infrastructures, and informational substrates as mutually conditioning rather than hierarchically ordered.

**12. Implications for Analysis, Resistance, and Institutional Design** Derive practical and theoretical consequences for scholars, policymakers, and citizens who seek to diagnose and respond to executive consolidation without reproducing the selective framing that the paper critiques.

**13. References**

1. [To be populated with numbered sources during section expansions, drawn from public records, historical analyses, theological texts, campaign finance data, and relevant preprints.]

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## 1. The Op-Ed's Domestic Framing and Its Analytical Limits

The Gephardt-Wirth memorandum constructs its warning around a single, tightly bounded domain: the incremental aggregation of executive authority inside the United States through security, law-enforcement, and administrative instruments. By confining the analysis to this domestic register, the text achieves rhetorical clarity and political urgency, yet it simultaneously produces a diagnostic that is structurally incomplete. The following subsections map the memo's architecture, its reliance on incrementalism as both description and explanation, and the analytical costs incurred when foreign-policy networks, theological infrastructures, and cross-domain alignments are placed outside the frame.

### 1.1 The Structure and Claims of the Gephardt-Wirth Memo

The memorandum opens by naming a set of observable developments—NPSM-7 and its focus on domestic terrorism and organized political violence, the creation of a multi-agency Joint Mission Center, expanded ICE detention capacity, DOJ actions on voter data, and the latent availability of President's Emergency Action Documents—and presents them as components of a single, coherent mechanism. Each element is described as individually defensible in the language of national security or law enforcement, yet collectively directed toward the identification, investigation, detention, and, if necessary, forcible suppression of Americans whose primary offense is opposition to the current administration. The text emphasizes that no single step appears dramatic enough to trigger unified institutional resistance, and that the public remains largely unaware of the overall architecture precisely because the pieces remain fragmented. The authors locate the danger not in a sudden seizure of power but in the methodical construction of an apparatus that can be activated under conditions the executive itself defines. This framing allows the memo to speak in the register of institutional analysis while delivering a partisan diagnosis of the present administration.

### 1.2 Incrementalism as Analytical Device

Incrementalism functions in the memorandum both as empirical description and as explanatory principle. The authors argue that each measure—whether the redefinition of domestic political activity under counterterrorism authorities, the scaling of detention infrastructure, or the pursuit of state voter records—arrives clothed in familiar administrative or security rationales. Because each step can be justified on its own terms, opposition remains fragmented and the cumulative effect escapes sustained scrutiny. The device is powerful for highlighting how administrative and legal language can normalize expansions of authority that would appear illegitimate if presented as a single package. At the same time, the exclusive focus on incremental domestic steps leaves unexamined the question of which larger alignments and legitimating narratives make those steps politically viable and bureaucratically sustainable.

Incrementality, in other words, is treated as an internal property of the executive apparatus rather than as a surface phenomenon sustained by networks that extend beyond the domestic security domain.

### 1.3 The Confinement to Domestic Mechanisms

The memorandum's analytical boundary is drawn at the water's edge of U.S. territory and at the institutional boundary of the executive branch. Foreign-policy considerations, donor networks with international alignments, and theological or cultural infrastructures that shape political constituencies are placed outside the model. This confinement produces a narrative in which the primary threat originates from within the current administration's security apparatus and is directed against domestic opponents. The text does not ask how external alignments or long-standing policy commitments might supply resources, rationales, or political cover for the very instruments it criticizes. Nor does it examine whether the definitions of "political violence," "organized networks," or "national crisis" that appear in NPSM-7 and related documents carry forward categories already shaped by decades of U.S. engagement with specific foreign partners and their domestic advocates. The result is a map of power that is internally coherent yet externally truncated.

### 1.4 Consequences of Excluding Israel-Related and Theological Domains

When pro-Israel lobbying networks, AIPAC-affiliated PAC activity, and the theological infrastructure of dispensationalist and Christian Zionist thought are omitted, several analytical distortions follow. First, the legitimating constituencies that render certain security measures politically low-cost remain invisible. Second, the migration of threat categories—particularly those linking "terrorism," "foreign influence," and domestic political activity—cannot be traced to their fuller historical and operational sources. Third, the possibility that donor alignments and policy commitments outside the domestic sphere help stabilize or direct the very apparatus under scrutiny is removed from consideration. These omissions are not incidental; they follow directly from the decision to treat the executive's domestic security tools as a self-contained system. A model that begins from this premise will necessarily understate the recursive relationships between foreign-policy commitments, theological political cultures, and the operational definitions that govern domestic enforcement.

### 1.5 Toward a More Complete Diagnostic

A corrected analysis must retain the memorandum's attention to incremental mechanism while enlarging the frame to include the networks and legitimating structures that make those mechanisms durable. This requires treating domestic security instruments, pro-Israel lobbying and donor activity, theological currents that anchor significant political support, and historical intelligence alignments as mutually conditioning layers rather than as separate domains. Such a

diagnostic does not replace the op-ed's concern with executive consolidation; it situates that concern inside a thicker description of the conditions under which consolidation becomes feasible and contestable. The subsequent sections of this paper develop the elements required for that thicker description, beginning with the historical and operational character of Israel-related influence networks and their intersections with the domestic instruments the memorandum identifies.

## 2. Historical Continuity of US-Israel Strategic Alignment

The United States–Israel relationship has exhibited remarkable durability across seven decades, sustained by a combination of strategic calculations, intelligence cooperation, and domestic political embedding. This continuity has produced institutional channels, shared threat vocabularies, and legitimating narratives that later intersect with domestic security instruments in ways that single-administration analyses tend to overlook. The following subsections trace the relationship from its post-1948 origins through the Cold War and into the contemporary period, identifying the durable features that complicate any attempt to isolate current executive measures from longer historical patterns.

### 2.1 Post-1948 Foundations and Early Strategic Alignment

Following the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, U.S. policy initially balanced recognition of the new state with concerns over regional stability and relations with Arab nations. Over the subsequent decade and a half, however, strategic calculations shifted as Israel demonstrated military effectiveness and as Cold War competition intensified. Shared perceptions of Soviet influence in the region, combined with Israel's developing intelligence and technological capabilities, created early patterns of cooperation that extended beyond formal diplomatic channels. These patterns included quiet intelligence exchanges and technology transfers that established precedents for later, more formalized arrangements. Domestic political support in the United States, rooted in both Jewish American communities and emerging evangelical constituencies, provided additional ballast that made the relationship resilient to periodic policy disagreements between the two governments.

### 2.2 Cold War Institutionalization and Intelligence Cooperation

During the Cold War, the relationship moved from ad hoc cooperation toward institutionalized channels. Intelligence sharing became a central pillar, with Israel providing human intelligence and regional expertise that complemented U.S. technical collection capabilities. Joint threat assessments, particularly regarding Soviet clients and later radical movements, generated common vocabularies for categorizing adversaries. These shared categories—especially those surrounding terrorism and state sponsorship—later migrated into domestic policy debates in

the United States. At the same time, military assistance programs and technology cooperation created constituencies within both the U.S. defense establishment and Congress that viewed the relationship as integral to American strategic posture. The institutionalization of these ties meant that subsequent administrations inherited not only policy commitments but also bureaucratic and political infrastructures that made abrupt departures costly.

### 2.3 Post-Cold War Evolution and Domestic Political Embedding

After the Cold War, the relationship adapted to new regional conditions while retaining core institutional features. The peace process of the 1990s temporarily emphasized diplomatic coordination, yet underlying security cooperation continued through intelligence liaison and counterterrorism collaboration. Domestically in the United States, the relationship became increasingly embedded in partisan and ideological structures. Bipartisan majorities in Congress routinely supported aid packages and resisted measures perceived as pressuring Israel. Simultaneously, theological developments within segments of American Christianity reinforced political support by framing the modern State of Israel in eschatological terms. These developments created overlapping constituencies—strategic, ethnic, and religious—that made the relationship resistant to recalibration even when specific Israeli policies generated controversy. The result was a durable alignment whose domestic political weight extended well beyond traditional foreign-policy elites.

### 2.4 Contemporary Intersections with Domestic Security Instruments

In the period following the attacks of September 2001 and continuing into the present, the accumulated history of cooperation supplied precedents and legitimating resources for domestic security measures. Shared threat categories developed through decades of intelligence exchange informed how “terrorism” and “organized political violence” were conceptualized in U.S. policy documents. Donor networks and lobbying organizations that had long advocated for strong bilateral ties acquired additional influence as counterterrorism priorities elevated the salience of certain foreign alignments. At the same time, theological and cultural narratives that had embedded the relationship in American political culture provided constituencies willing to support executive actions framed in terms of national security or civilizational defense. These intersections mean that instruments such as expanded detention authorities, data-access initiatives, and emergency planning documents operate within an environment already shaped by long-standing external alignments rather than in a purely domestic vacuum.

### 2.5 Implications for Analyses of Executive Power

Recognizing this historical continuity alters the diagnostic task. Analyses that treat current domestic security measures as products of a single administration’s incremental choices

necessarily understate the extent to which those measures draw upon pre-existing channels of cooperation, shared definitional frameworks, and domestic political infrastructures built over decades. The omission does not merely leave out background context; it removes from view the mechanisms through which foreign-policy alignments help stabilize and direct the very tools under scrutiny. A corrected approach must therefore treat the historical relationship as an active layer within the contemporary architecture rather than as an external factor safely bracketed from domestic analysis. This reframing sets the stage for examining the more immediate operational mechanisms—particularly lobbying and donor networks—through which that historical alignment continues to shape present possibilities.

## 3. Mechanisms of Pro-Israel Lobby Influence

Pro-Israel lobbying organizations, most prominently AIPAC and its affiliated political action committees, operate through a set of well-documented tools that have proven effective across multiple administrations and congressional majorities. These mechanisms—campaign finance, access to policymakers, legislative framing, and electoral deterrence—function within the larger ecology of U.S. interest-group politics yet have achieved distinctive reach in shaping outcomes related to Israel policy and adjacent domains. The following subsections examine these tools in operation, distinguish routine advocacy from stronger claims of singular control, and locate their activity in relation to the domestic security instruments highlighted in the Gephardt-Wirth memorandum.

### 3.1 Organizational Structure and Operational Tools

AIPAC functions as a 501(c)(4) advocacy organization that does not itself contribute directly to candidates. Its influence operates through affiliated PACs, donor networks, and a professional staff that maintains sustained relationships with members of Congress and executive branch officials. The organization prioritizes education, briefings, and trips to Israel that expose policymakers to Israeli perspectives on regional security. These activities generate familiarity and access that later translate into legislative support for aid packages, sanctions measures, and resolutions affirming the bilateral relationship. The operational model emphasizes relationship maintenance and rapid response to emerging legislative threats rather than public confrontation, allowing the organization to sustain influence across changes in partisan control of Congress and the White House.

### 3.2 Campaign Finance and Electoral Mechanisms

Affiliated pro-Israel PACs direct contributions to candidates who demonstrate consistent support for strong U.S.-Israel ties. Data from multiple election cycles show that recipients of significant pro-Israel PAC funding tend to maintain voting records favorable to aid and sanctions

priorities. The scale of these contributions, while not the largest in American politics, is concentrated in key committees and among members whose positions affect foreign aid and Middle East policy. In recent cycles, affiliated super PACs have also engaged in independent expenditures, including substantial spending in primaries against candidates viewed as insufficiently supportive. This pattern creates both positive incentives for alignment and negative incentives against deviation, particularly in districts where organized opposition can mobilize resources effectively.

### 3.3 Access, Framing, and Legislative Influence

Beyond direct contributions, the lobby secures regular access to members and staff through briefings, hearings, and informal consultations. This access allows the organization to shape the framing of legislation concerning Israel, Iran sanctions, and related security assistance. Success is visible in the frequency with which congressional resolutions and aid authorizations reflect priorities articulated by pro-Israel advocates. The framing often emphasizes shared democratic values, strategic partnership against common adversaries, and moral commitments derived from historical memory. These frames have proven resilient across administrations because they resonate with both security realists and values-oriented constituencies, thereby broadening the coalition that sustains policy continuity.

### 3.4 Primary Challenges and Deterrence Effects

A more recent and visible mechanism involves targeted intervention in primaries against sitting members perceived as hostile to core Israel policy positions. Significant independent expenditures by affiliated super PACs have defeated or seriously challenged several incumbents in both parties. The effect extends beyond the specific races contested: the demonstrated willingness to mobilize substantial resources against deviation creates a deterrent environment in which many members calibrate their public positions to avoid becoming targets. This deterrence operates most strongly on members whose districts or committees place them in proximity to foreign policy decision points. The result is a narrowing of the range of acceptable dissent on Israel-related questions within Congress, even when broader public opinion shows greater variation.

### 3.5 Distinguishing Legitimate Advocacy from Exaggerated Claims

The tools described above are standard features of interest-group politics in the United States. Many other lobbies—representing industries, labor, ethnic communities, and ideological causes—employ comparable combinations of contributions, access, and electoral pressure. Claims that portray the pro-Israel lobby as exercising unique or conspiratorial control over U.S. policy overstate the evidence and ignore counter-examples in which administrations have pursued courses opposed by significant segments of the organized pro-Israel community. At the

same time, the documented effectiveness of these mechanisms in sustaining high levels of aid, sanctions coordination, and rhetorical support is real and measurable. A balanced assessment recognizes both the routine character of the advocacy and its outsized success within its specific policy domain relative to many other foreign-policy lobbies.

### 3.6 Location within Broader Donor and Policy Ecologies

Pro-Israel lobbying does not operate in isolation. It intersects with defense industry interests, energy sector concerns regarding regional stability, and ideological networks that view Israel through the lens of counterterrorism or civilizational conflict. Donor overlap exists with other foreign-policy and domestic issue PACs, creating denser webs of influence than single-organization analyses capture. These intersections matter for domestic security policy because they expand the constituencies willing to support measures framed in terms of threat prevention or emergency preparedness. When definitions of political violence or national crisis align with threat narratives already circulating through these networks, the political costs of expanding domestic instruments decline.

### 3.7 Intersections with Domestic Security and Emergency Frameworks

The mechanisms of lobby influence intersect with the instruments discussed in the Gephardt-Wirth memorandum at the level of threat definition and political sustainability. Decades of advocacy have helped normalize the treatment of certain foreign-aligned networks as requiring heightened scrutiny, a framing that can migrate into domestic counterterrorism authorities. Campaign finance and access advantages also reduce the political friction associated with scaling detention capacity or pursuing voter data initiatives when these are presented as responses to infiltration or integrity threats. While direct causation is difficult to establish in any single case, the cumulative effect of sustained lobbying is to enlarge the coalition that views expansive security measures as prudent rather than exceptional. This dynamic supplies one of the missing layers in analyses that treat domestic executive consolidation as self-generated within a single administration.

## 4. Dispensationalist Theology and Christian Zionism as Political Infrastructure

Interpretive frameworks originating in nineteenth-century dispensationalism and later popularized through the Scofield Reference Bible and subsequent media have generated durable political constituencies within American Christianity. These constituencies treat the modern State of Israel and its security policies as carrying eschatological significance, thereby supplying consistent political support for strong bilateral alignment. This theological infrastructure functions as more than background belief; it shapes coalition formation, reduces the political costs of certain foreign-policy commitments, and influences how threat narratives

are received within significant segments of the electorate. The following subsections trace the development of these frameworks and their translation into political infrastructure that intersects with the domestic security mechanisms under examination.

### 4.1 Origins in Darby and Scofield

The interpretive system known as dispensational premillennialism emerged in the nineteenth century through the teachings of John Nelson Darby and was systematized for American readers in the Scofield Reference Bible. This framework divides history into distinct dispensations and posits a literal future fulfillment of biblical promises to national Israel, including a restored Jewish state and a central role for that state in end-times events. The Scofield Bible's widespread distribution embedded these categories in American Protestant reading practices, creating a textual apparatus that linked contemporary geopolitics to prophetic expectation. While not all users of the Scofield Bible adopted political activism, the framework supplied a ready-made lens through which later events in the Middle East could be interpreted as confirmation of divine timetable rather than contingent history.

### 4.2 Popularization and Media Amplification

Throughout the twentieth century, dispensationalist readings moved from niche theological circles into broader evangelical culture through books, conferences, and eventually mass media. Works such as *The Late Great Planet Earth* and the *Left Behind* series translated dispensational categories into accessible narrative form, reaching audiences far beyond seminary settings. Television ministries and prophecy conferences further amplified the connection between current events in Israel and imminent eschatological fulfillment. This popularization created a feedback loop in which geopolitical developments were routinely framed as signs of the times, reinforcing political support for policies that strengthened Israel's position. The result was a cultural infrastructure capable of mobilizing large numbers of voters and donors around Israel-related issues without requiring formal organizational membership.

### 4.3 Formation of Political Constituencies

The theological infrastructure produced identifiable political constituencies that treat robust U.S. support for Israel as a matter of religious conviction rather than strategic calculation alone. These constituencies have demonstrated consistent willingness to prioritize Israel policy in voting decisions and to apply pressure on elected officials who appear insufficiently supportive. Surveys and voting data across multiple decades show that white evangelical Protestants, the demographic most shaped by dispensationalist popularization, maintain higher levels of support for Israel and greater skepticism toward pressure on Israeli policy than other religious or secular groups. This constituency effect creates reliable majorities for aid packages and resolutions even

when other foreign-policy priorities might suggest different allocations of attention or resources.

### 4.4 Influence on Coalition Dynamics and Policy Support

The presence of eschatologically motivated constituencies alters coalition dynamics within both major parties. Within Republican coalitions, dispensationalist frameworks reinforce alignment between security hawks, defense interests, and religious voters, producing durable support for strong Israel policy across administrations. Within Democratic coalitions, the same frameworks create internal tension, as progressive and mainline constituencies often prioritize different regional or human-rights considerations. The net effect is to raise the political cost of policy recalibration and to stabilize aid and sanctions measures even when strategic conditions shift. Lobbying organizations benefit from this pre-existing constituency base, as theological conviction supplies motivation and turnout that purely interest-based advocacy cannot replicate on its own.

### 4.5 Interaction with Threat Perceptions and Security Language

Dispensationalist frameworks interact with security language by supplying a cosmic narrative within which certain adversaries appear not merely as geopolitical competitors but as participants in a larger spiritual conflict. This narrative can render expansive definitions of terrorism, emergency conditions, and domestic vigilance more plausible to audiences already primed to interpret Middle East events through prophetic categories. When domestic security instruments such as NPSM-7 or detention expansion are framed in terms of preventing infiltration or organized violence linked to regional adversaries, the theological infrastructure provides a receptive audience less likely to view such measures as exceptional. The interaction does not require direct coordination; it operates through convergent threat perceptions that make certain executive actions appear prudent rather than overreaching to significant voter blocs.

### 4.6 Implications for Analyses of Domestic Power Consolidation

Any account of contemporary executive consolidation that omits this theological infrastructure necessarily understates the political resources available to sustain and legitimize the instruments under scrutiny. The Gephardt-Wirth memorandum correctly identifies incremental domestic mechanisms yet treats their political viability as arising solely from executive initiative. In reality, long-standing dispensationalist and Christian Zionist constituencies supply a durable base of support that lowers the costs of measures framed in security or civilizational terms. Recognizing this layer does not reduce the memorandum's concerns to theological causation; it reveals how domestic security tools operate within an environment already structured by interpretive frameworks that predate any single administration. This recognition prepares the

ground for examining the intelligence and definitional channels through which historical alignments and theological infrastructures converge on present policy.

## 5. Intelligence Cooperation and Definitional Power

Decades of intelligence cooperation between the United States and Israel have generated shared threat vocabularies, joint operational practices, and definitional frameworks that later migrate into domestic policy domains. These frameworks do not remain confined to foreign intelligence; they influence how categories such as terrorism, organized political violence, and foreign influence are constructed and applied inside the United States. The following subsections trace the historical development of this cooperation and examine how its definitional outputs shape the operational environment for the domestic security instruments identified in the Gephardt-Wirth memorandum.

### 5.1 Historical Development of Intelligence Sharing

Intelligence cooperation between the two countries began in limited form after 1948 and expanded significantly during the Cold War as both states confronted Soviet-aligned actors in the region. Israel developed specialized human intelligence capabilities and regional expertise that complemented U.S. technical collection systems. Over time, liaison relationships, joint training, and technology exchanges created institutional habits of collaboration that survived changes in administration and shifts in regional priorities. These habits included regular exchanges of raw intelligence, finished assessments, and operational techniques for countering terrorism and subversion. The accumulated infrastructure of sharing meant that subsequent generations of U.S. officials inherited not only specific data streams but also established ways of categorizing threats that originated in part from Israeli operational experience.

### 5.2 Joint Threat Designations and Category Migration

Cooperation produced joint or convergent threat designations, particularly regarding state sponsors of terrorism, non-state networks, and methods of subversion. Terms and typologies developed in the context of Middle East operations—such as distinctions between “foreign” and “domestic” terrorism or between ideological and operational support networks—later appeared in U.S. domestic policy documents. This migration occurred through multiple channels: intelligence assessments that informed congressional and executive branch deliberations, training programs that shaped law enforcement and homeland security personnel, and public threat narratives that drew on classified cooperation to justify policy choices. The result was a gradual alignment of definitional categories across foreign and domestic domains rather than a sharp separation between them.

### 5.3 The Movement of Concepts Across Domains

Concepts such as “terrorism,” “organized political violence,” and “foreign agent” have moved across the boundary between international and domestic policy with increasing fluidity. Intelligence liaison relationships facilitated the transfer of analytical models for identifying radicalization, funding networks, and covert influence operations. These models, originally refined in response to external threats, supplied templates that could be adapted for domestic application when political conditions favored expansion of internal security authorities. The movement was not unidirectional; U.S. domestic legal and bureaucratic innovations in turn influenced how Israeli partners framed their own threat environments. Over time, the two systems developed overlapping vocabularies that made certain categories appear natural and portable rather than context-specific.

### 5.4 Impact on Domestic Security Instruments

The shared definitional infrastructure directly shapes the operational environment for instruments such as NPSM-7 and related counter-network initiatives. When domestic policy documents employ categories of “organized political violence” or “funding networks” that carry forward distinctions refined through decades of intelligence cooperation, they import assumptions about the structure and behavior of adversaries that originated in foreign operational contexts. This importation affects targeting priorities, investigative techniques, and the allocation of resources across agencies. It also influences how political opposition or dissent is parsed—whether as protected speech or as potential vector for foreign-aligned disruption—depending on the analytical models in use. The effect is to embed foreign-policy-derived frameworks inside domestic enforcement without requiring explicit acknowledgment of their origins.

### 5.5 Definitional Power and Its Political Effects

Definitional power refers to the capacity to establish the categories through which events and actors are understood and acted upon. Intelligence cooperation has contributed to this capacity by supplying authoritative-sounding typologies that travel from classified assessments into public policy and political discourse. Once embedded, these typologies reduce the political friction associated with expanding domestic authorities, because they appear as technical or evidence-based rather than politically constructed. At the same time, the migration of categories creates opportunities for alignment between security bureaucracies and external advocates who share similar threat perceptions. The result is a feedback loop in which definitional choices made in one domain reinforce the perceived necessity of instruments in another, stabilizing the overall architecture across changes in administration.

### 5.6 Implications for the Analysis of Executive Consolidation

Analyses that confine themselves to domestic incrementalism necessarily treat definitional categories as products of the current executive rather than as inherited and co-produced resources. The Gephardt-Wirth memorandum correctly identifies how NPSM-7 and related measures can be directed against domestic opponents, yet it does not examine how the categories employed in those measures were shaped by long-standing intelligence relationships and joint threat work. Recognizing this layer reveals that the operational environment for domestic consolidation is not generated solely within the executive branch; it is also conditioned by external partnerships that predate and outlast any single administration. This recognition prepares the analysis to examine the more immediate points of intersection between these inherited frameworks and the specific domestic instruments now under scrutiny.

## 6. Intersections Between Foreign-Policy Alignments and Domestic Enforcement Tools

Foreign-policy alignments with Israel, sustained through decades of strategic partnership, lobbying activity, theological support, and intelligence cooperation, intersect with domestic enforcement instruments at multiple concrete points. These intersections do not require direct causation in every instance; they operate through shared threat categories, donor incentives, and legitimating narratives that reduce political resistance to measures such as detention expansion, data access initiatives, and counter-network operations. The following subsections identify specific points of contact and assess their cumulative contribution to the architecture of executive consolidation.

### 6.1 Policy Priorities and Resource Allocation

Israel-related policy priorities influence the allocation of attention and resources within U.S. security bureaucracies in ways that can spill over into domestic domains. Long-standing commitments to countering certain regional adversaries generate analytical models and funding streams that agencies later adapt when addressing perceived internal threats. When domestic policy documents adopt similar language regarding organized networks or foreign-aligned influence, they draw upon categories already legitimized through years of external engagement. This creates path dependence in which resources and personnel trained on external threats become available for redeployment once political conditions favor internal application.

### 6.2 Donor Networks and Political Sustainability

Donor networks connected to strong Israel policy positions provide financial and organizational resources that help sustain domestic enforcement measures when those measures are framed in compatible threat language. Contributions and access advantages enjoyed by aligned

candidates and officials lower the political costs of supporting expanded detention capacity or data-access authorities. Conversely, the demonstrated willingness of these networks to mobilize against deviation creates deterrence effects that discourage scrutiny of incremental expansions. The result is an environment in which certain domestic instruments face reduced legislative or public opposition because they align with donor and constituency priorities already organized around foreign-policy commitments.

### 6.3 Definitional Authority and Threat Framing

Shared definitional authority over concepts such as terrorism, political violence, and emergency conditions allows foreign-policy alignments to shape how domestic measures are justified. When NPSM-7 and related documents employ categories refined through intelligence cooperation and advocacy, they inherit framing power that makes internal application appear continuous with established external practice rather than novel. This continuity reduces the perceived exceptionality of domestic deployment and enlarges the coalition willing to accept expanded authorities. Theological and cultural narratives that already interpret regional adversaries through heightened threat lenses further reinforce the plausibility of parallel domestic vigilance.

### 6.4 Detention Expansion and Counter-Network Operations

Expansion of detention infrastructure intersects with foreign-policy alignments through both resource justification and operational precedent. Arguments for increased capacity often cite the need to manage threats linked to regional instability or infiltration, categories already normalized through external engagement. Counter-network operations targeting funding or radicalization draw on analytical templates developed in intelligence liaison relationships. While the primary stated purpose may remain immigration or criminal enforcement, the infrastructure and doctrinal resources carry forward assumptions shaped by decades of external threat work, creating latent capacity that can be directed toward domestic political networks when definitions expand.

### 6.5 Voter Data Access and Integrity Initiatives

Initiatives to access and cleanse voter rolls intersect with foreign-policy alignments at the level of integrity and infiltration framing. Concerns about non-citizen voting or foreign influence in elections draw upon threat categories refined through intelligence cooperation and advocacy regarding external interference. When these concerns are paired with data-access requests or maintenance requirements, they can mobilize support from constituencies already organized around vigilance against external subversion. The intersection does not imply that every integrity measure serves foreign-policy ends; it indicates that the political and rhetorical

environment for such measures is conditioned by alignments that predate and extend beyond any single administration's domestic agenda.

### 6.6 Emergency Conditions and Latent Authorities

The latent availability of emergency authorities, including President's Emergency Action Documents, intersects with foreign-policy alignments through the construction of crisis narratives. Decades of cooperation have produced shared assessments of regional threats that can be invoked to justify domestic emergency measures when analogous conditions are asserted internally. Donor and theological networks that treat certain adversaries as existentially significant supply constituencies prepared to accept emergency framing with limited scrutiny. This intersection creates conditions under which the activation threshold for latent authorities may be lower than a purely domestic analysis would predict.

### 6.7 Cumulative Effects on the Architecture of Consolidation

Taken together, these points of contact demonstrate that domestic enforcement tools operate within an environment already structured by foreign-policy alignments rather than in isolation. The Gephardt-Wirth memorandum correctly identifies incremental domestic mechanisms yet attributes their viability primarily to executive initiative. In practice, the sustainability and operational reach of those mechanisms are supported by intersecting networks of policy priority, donor incentive, definitional authority, and constituency mobilization that originate in or pass through Israel-related alignments. Recognizing these intersections does not collapse the analysis into foreign-policy determinism; it reveals the multi-layered character of the architecture that any complete diagnostic must address. This recognition sets the stage for examining how the specific authors of the memorandum position themselves relative to the omitted layers.

## 7. The Authors' Positionality and the Politics of Omission

The authors of the memorandum, Richard Gephardt and Timothy Wirth, bring to their analysis a specific generational and institutional positionality within the Democratic Party that shapes both what they foreground and what they bracket. Their careers unfolded during the period of strongest bipartisan consensus on the U.S.-Israel relationship, and their subsequent public roles have remained within institutional networks that continue to treat that relationship as strategic bedrock rather than contested terrain. This positionality produces a diagnostic that isolates domestic executive mechanisms while leaving foreign-policy alignments, lobbying infrastructures, and theological constituencies largely outside the frame. The following subsections locate the authors within their historical context and examine how that location conditions the boundaries of their critique.

### 7.1 Generational and Institutional Background

Both authors served in Congress during the final decades of the Cold War and the immediate post-Cold War period, when support for Israel functioned as a relatively uncontroversial marker of mainstream foreign-policy competence within the Democratic Party. Gephardt rose to House leadership positions in an era when Democratic majorities routinely backed substantial military and economic assistance to Israel alongside strategic cooperation against Soviet influence. Wirth's Senate service and later executive branch role similarly placed him within institutional settings where the bilateral relationship was treated as a settled element of U.S. posture in the Middle East. These experiences formed habits of analysis that prioritize institutional checks within the domestic constitutional order while treating external alignments as background conditions rather than active variables in domestic power dynamics.

### 7.2 Alignment with Traditional Democratic Consensus on Israel

The traditional Democratic consensus during the authors' active political careers viewed robust U.S.-Israel ties as consistent with both strategic realism and values-based foreign policy. This consensus encompassed support for qualitative military edge, intelligence cooperation, and diplomatic cover in international forums. It also included tolerance for the domestic political activities of pro-Israel organizations as legitimate interest-group behavior within a pluralist system. Gephardt in particular participated in public events affirming the importance of the relationship and received contributions from pro-Israel PACs during cycles when such support aligned with party leadership positions. This alignment did not require uncritical endorsement of every Israeli policy; it did, however, embed an assumption that the overall architecture of the relationship operated outside the primary domain of domestic institutional critique.

### 7.3 Contrast with Contemporary Progressive Critiques

More recent progressive critiques within the Democratic Party have subjected Israel policy, AIPAC influence, and the theological currents supporting unconditional alignment to sustained scrutiny. These critiques emphasize human-rights considerations, the costs of military aid, and the role of donor networks in narrowing acceptable debate. They frequently treat lobbying activity and definitional power over threat categories as central variables rather than background features. The generational difference is significant: where Gephardt and Wirth operated within a consensus that rendered such factors largely invisible to domestic power analysis, newer progressive voices have made them explicit objects of contestation. The memorandum reflects the earlier formation, in which foreign-policy alignments and their domestic political supports remain largely unproblematized.

### 7.4 How Positionality Shapes Narrative Boundaries

Positionality determines which mechanisms appear as primary drivers and which appear as secondary or external. For authors formed within the traditional consensus, the most salient threats to democratic norms arise from executive overreach within the domestic constitutional system. Foreign-policy commitments and the networks that sustain them are treated as relatively stable features of the landscape rather than as variables that help constitute the landscape itself. This produces a narrative boundary that places Israel-related lobbying, theological infrastructure, and intelligence-derived categories outside the primary causal story. The boundary is not necessarily conscious; it follows from the institutional and generational location from which the analysis is written.

### 7.5 The Selective Bracketing of Influence Channels

The memorandum's focus on domestic incrementalism brackets several influence channels that intersect with the very instruments it criticizes. Lobbying and donor activity that help stabilize political support for expansive security measures remain unexamined. Theological constituencies that lower the political costs of framing opposition in civilizational or infiltration terms are not incorporated. Intelligence cooperation that supplies categories later applied domestically is treated as background rather than as an active layer. This selective bracketing allows the text to maintain analytic coherence within its chosen domain while rendering invisible the recursive relationships between external alignments and internal enforcement tools. The result is a diagnostic that is internally consistent yet externally truncated.

### 7.6 Consequences for Diagnostic Completeness

When positionality leads to the systematic omission of certain layers, the resulting diagnosis understates the full set of conditions that make incremental consolidation feasible and sustainable. The memorandum correctly identifies how security language can mask the aggregation of authority. It does not, however, account for the political resources, definitional inheritances, and constituency bases that make those aggregations viable over time. A more complete diagnostic must therefore move beyond the authors' generational and institutional location to incorporate the omitted channels as active components of the architecture rather than as external context. This movement does not invalidate the memorandum's concerns; it situates them within a thicker description of the conditions under which they arise.

### 7.7 Implications for Corrective Analysis

Corrective analysis begins by treating the authors' positionality as data rather than as neutral vantage point. Their formation within a consensus that bracketed Israel-related factors explains both the strengths and the limits of their text. The strengths lie in the careful mapping of domestic incremental mechanisms. The limits lie in the inability to see how those mechanisms

are conditioned by networks and infrastructures that their institutional location rendered largely invisible. Subsequent sections of this paper develop the additional layers required for a more complete map, beginning with the informational and consciousness substrates that underlie both institutional and theological power.

## 8. Informational and Consciousness Substrates of Institutional Power

Institutional analyses of executive consolidation typically treat power as a product of formal structures, legal authorities, and material resources. While these elements are observable and consequential, they do not exhaust the architecture. A more complete account must incorporate informational and consciousness substrates—the resonant patterns through which categories, narratives, and alignments are sustained and transmitted across individuals and institutions. The following subsections introduce this non-materialist lens and demonstrate how it reframes the significance of the theological and lobbying networks previously examined.

### 8.1 Limits of Purely Institutional and Material Analyses

Purely institutional and material analyses correctly identify observable mechanisms such as presidential memoranda, detention capacity, data-access initiatives, and emergency planning documents. They can trace incremental changes in legal authorities and bureaucratic practice. However, these analyses encounter difficulty when asked to explain why certain categories of threat or emergency appear natural to some actors and implausible to others, or why donor and constituency support for particular alignments persists across changes in strategic conditions. Material and institutional factors alone do not account for the durability of interpretive frameworks or the selective permeability of political systems to certain influence channels. A supplementary layer is required to address the transmission and resonance of patterns that precede and outlast any given set of formal arrangements.

### 8.2 Informational Substrates as Fundamental Layer

Informational substrates refer to the underlying patterns of data, category, and narrative through which events are parsed and acted upon. These substrates are not reducible to physical infrastructure or legal text; they consist in the recursive relationships among concepts, threat typologies, and legitimating stories that circulate through institutions, media, and populations. In the context of executive power, informational substrates determine which increments appear continuous with established practice and which appear as ruptures. When categories such as “organized political violence” or “foreign-aligned network” carry forward distinctions refined through intelligence cooperation and theological interpretation, they function as informational resources that stabilize particular institutional trajectories. The substrate layer therefore conditions the feasibility and visibility of the mechanisms described in domestic-only accounts.

### 8.3 Consciousness and Resonant Patterns in Power Dynamics

Consciousness participates in power dynamics through resonant patterns that align individual and collective perception with institutional categories. These patterns are not merely psychological; they reflect the entrainment of attention and interpretation by repeated exposure to particular narratives and threat models. Theological frameworks that treat modern Israel policy as eschatologically significant generate resonant patterns that render certain security measures intelligible and urgent to large constituencies. Lobbying and donor networks amplify and reinforce these patterns through sustained messaging and selective access. When domestic enforcement tools are introduced using categories already resonant within these patterns, they encounter lower resistance because they activate pre-existing alignments of attention rather than requiring new interpretive work. The consciousness layer thus supplies the medium through which informational substrates become politically effective.

### 8.4 Reframing Theological and Lobby Networks

Within a purely institutional frame, theological and lobbying networks appear as external interest groups or cultural background. Within an informational and consciousness frame, they appear as active participants in the substrate that makes institutional consolidation possible. Dispensationalist and Christian Zionist interpretive systems function as durable informational structures that pre-sort events into categories of prophetic significance or civilizational threat. Pro-Israel lobbying mechanisms operate as amplifiers and selectors within the same substrate, sustaining certain alignments while marginalizing others. When these networks are omitted from analysis, the model loses the capacity to explain why particular domestic instruments receive political cover or why definitional migrations from foreign-policy domains encounter little friction. The reframing restores these networks as constitutive rather than incidental elements of the architecture.

### 8.5 Recursive Feedback Across Layers

The layers—material and institutional, informational, and consciousness—stand in recursive relationship rather than in linear hierarchy. Institutional changes alter the informational environment by codifying new categories or authorities. Those categories then shape the resonant patterns available to consciousness, which in turn influence which institutional changes become politically sustainable. Theological and lobbying networks participate in this recursion by supplying both informational content and consciousness-level resonance that stabilize or destabilize particular trajectories. Domestic security instruments such as NPSM-7 or detention expansion are therefore not self-contained products of executive initiative; they emerge from and feed back into a multi-layered system in which omitted factors continue to operate even when unacknowledged.

### 8.6 Implications for the Architecture of Executive Consolidation

Applying this lens to the mechanisms identified in the Gephardt-Wirth memorandum reveals that the incremental domestic steps described are embedded within a larger resonant architecture. The memorandum correctly maps observable institutional changes yet treats their political and operational viability as arising primarily from internal executive dynamics. An informational and consciousness account shows that viability is also conditioned by substrate patterns sustained through theological interpretation, lobbying amplification, and inherited intelligence categories. The architecture of consolidation therefore includes recursive loops that cross the domestic-foreign boundary and the material-informational boundary. Analyses that remain within a single layer necessarily produce partial maps.

### 8.7 Connection to Corrective Diagnostic

The corrective diagnostic developed across this paper incorporates the informational and consciousness substrates as an explicit layer rather than as implicit background. This incorporation does not replace attention to institutional mechanisms; it situates those mechanisms within the fuller set of conditions that render them durable and effective. By restoring theological networks, lobbying infrastructures, and intelligence-derived categories as participants in resonant patterns, the analysis recovers the omitted factors that make a purely domestic incrementalism narrative incomplete. The subsequent sections apply this multi-layered model to specific domains such as voter data initiatives and emergency authorities, demonstrating how the substrate layer alters the significance assigned to each.

## 9. Voter Data, Election Integrity, and Cross-Domain Pressure Points

Efforts to access, verify, and maintain voter rolls have reemerged as contested policy terrain, framed variously as routine administrative hygiene, integrity protection, or potential vector for external interference. These initiatives intersect with foreign-policy alignments, intelligence-derived categories, and domestic political networks in ways that reveal couplings across domains. The following subsections examine the technical and rhetorical dimensions of voter data efforts and assess how they function as pressure points within the larger architecture of consolidation.

### 9.1 The Return of Voter Roll Maintenance as Policy Priority

Voter roll maintenance has long been a statutory obligation under federal and state law, yet its salience has fluctuated with partisan control and perceptions of electoral vulnerability. Recent administrations have elevated the issue through executive directives directing federal agencies to assist states in citizenship verification and list accuracy. The elevation reflects both genuine

concerns about ineligible registrations and strategic calculations about the political utility of integrity narratives. When framed as response to infiltration or dilution risks, maintenance initiatives acquire resonance with threat categories already circulating through intelligence and advocacy channels. This resonance converts a technical administrative function into a site where domestic and external alignments can converge without explicit acknowledgment.

### 9.2 Citizenship Verification and Data Access Initiatives

Citizenship verification requires access to federal databases and state records that have historically been guarded by federalism and privacy considerations. Recent initiatives have sought to expand federal assistance to states for matching voter rolls against immigration and citizenship data. Proponents argue that such matching fulfills existing legal obligations and deters non-citizen participation. Critics contend that the scale and centralization of data requests create new surveillance capacities and selective enforcement risks. The technical architecture of these initiatives—centralized matching, unredacted record requests, and integration with SAVE-system updates—creates pressure points where federal priorities can influence state-level administration even in the absence of direct statutory mandate. These pressure points become sites at which external alignment concerns can enter domestic electoral administration through ostensibly neutral integrity procedures.

### 9.3 Foreign Influence Framing and Its Migration

Parallel to citizenship verification efforts, narratives linking voter integrity to foreign influence have gained prominence. These narratives draw upon intelligence assessments and advocacy language developed in response to external election interference concerns. When domestic voter data initiatives are justified in part by reference to infiltration risks or foreign-aligned networks, they import categories refined through international threat work. The migration is facilitated by the informational substrates examined earlier: categories such as “organized political violence” or “funding networks” already carry cross-domain portability. As a result, administrative actions on voter rolls can be presented as continuous with established security practice rather than as novel expansions of federal reach into state electoral systems.

### 9.4 Cross-Domain Pressure Points

Cross-domain pressure points emerge where domestic administrative action intersects with external alignment incentives. Donor networks and lobbying organizations that prioritize strong Israel policy have also shown interest in election integrity measures framed as protection against subversion. Theological constituencies already attuned to civilizational threat narratives provide receptive audiences for integrity arguments that link internal vulnerabilities to external actors. Intelligence-derived categories supply the analytical bridge that makes such linkages appear natural. These pressure points do not require coordinated direction; they arise from

convergent interests and shared interpretive resources that make certain domestic initiatives low-friction for aligned networks while raising costs for opposition.

### 9.5 Couplings Between Domestic Action and External Alignments

The couplings between voter data initiatives and external alignments operate through multiple channels. Political sustainability is enhanced when integrity measures receive support from constituencies already organized around foreign-policy vigilance. Definitional authority is strengthened when categories of infiltration or network activity migrate from intelligence cooperation into domestic administrative justification. Resource allocation can shift when federal agencies tasked with external threat monitoring are directed to assist internal list maintenance. These couplings remain partially obscured when analysis remains confined to domestic incrementalism. They become visible once the informational and consciousness substrates that link external alignments to internal enforcement are incorporated into the model.

### 9.6 Implications for the Architecture of Consolidation

Voter data and election integrity initiatives function as concrete sites where the multi-layered architecture becomes observable. Domestic administrative action is not self-contained; it draws upon threat categories, donor incentives, and constituency resonance supplied in part by foreign-policy alignments and their supporting infrastructures. The Gephardt-Wirth memorandum correctly identifies the pursuit of voter records as one element in the incremental domestic apparatus. It does not, however, examine how that pursuit is conditioned by cross-domain couplings that predate and extend beyond the current administration. Recognizing these couplings reveals voter data efforts as pressure points within a recursive system rather than as isolated domestic maneuvers.

### 9.7 Limits of Domestic-Only Analysis

A domestic-only analysis can document the expansion of data-access requests and the rhetorical framing of integrity as security. It cannot fully explain why such expansions encounter the specific pattern of support and resistance they do, nor can it trace the origins of the categories that make integrity initiatives appear continuous with counter-infiltration practice. The omitted layers—lobbying networks, theological infrastructures, intelligence-derived definitions—supply resources that stabilize particular trajectories while marginalizing others. A corrected diagnostic must therefore treat voter data initiatives as nodes within the larger architecture rather than as self-generated domestic increments. This treatment prepares the analysis to examine the still more latent domain of emergency authorities and their potential activation.

## 10. Emergency Powers, PEADs, and the Latent Architecture

Presidential Emergency Action Documents constitute a classified body of draft authorities prepared for extreme contingencies. Their existence has long been acknowledged in general terms, yet their specific content and activation thresholds remain largely shielded from congressional and public scrutiny. The following subsections review their historical development, examine the conditions under which they might be invoked, and assess how theological and lobby-mediated threat narratives could supply justificatory frames that intersect with the domestic mechanisms already under discussion.

### 10.1 Historical Development of Presidential Emergency Action Documents

Presidential Emergency Action Documents originated in Cold War continuity-of-government planning as instruments to preserve essential functions in the event of nuclear attack or catastrophic disruption of normal governmental operations. Over subsequent decades, the scope of contemplated scenarios expanded beyond immediate existential threats to include severe domestic unrest, large-scale terrorist attacks, and other conditions that might justify extraordinary executive measures. Successive administrations updated and refined the documents, incorporating lessons from exercises and real-world crises. The result is a standing body of draft orders, proclamations, and legislative proposals that can be activated with minimal procedural delay once a president determines that requisite conditions exist. This historical layering means that contemporary invocation would draw upon authorities refined across multiple threat environments rather than upon instruments created for a single purpose.

### 10.2 Classified Character and Limited Oversight

The classified character of PEADs has produced a structural asymmetry between executive preparedness and legislative or judicial visibility. While general descriptions of their purpose have appeared in congressional testimony and declassified materials, the specific content of the documents remains restricted. This restriction limits the capacity of Congress to conduct meaningful oversight of the conditions under which activation might occur or of the scope of authorities that would be exercised. Courts have historically deferred to executive determinations in emergency contexts, further reducing external checks. The combination of classification and deference creates a latent architecture whose operational parameters are known primarily to those inside the executive branch and a small circle of cleared personnel. This architecture sits alongside the observable incremental mechanisms described in domestic-only analyses.

### 10.3 Conditions for Invocation

Invocation of PEADs requires a presidential determination that an emergency of sufficient gravity exists. The precise thresholds are not publicly codified in detail, and historical practice

shows considerable variation in how presidents have characterized crises warranting extraordinary measures. In principle, the documents are intended for situations in which normal constitutional processes are disrupted or inadequate. In practice, the determination of inadequacy rests with the executive, subject only to subsequent political or legal challenge after the fact. This placement of authority creates the possibility that domestic conditions framed through categories of organized political violence, infiltration, or civilizational threat could be presented as meeting the threshold. The latent character of the documents means that such framing need not be tested in advance through legislative or public deliberation.

### 10.4 Theological and Lobby-Mediated Threat Narratives

Theological and lobby-mediated threat narratives can supply justificatory frames that lower the perceived barriers to PEAD activation. Dispensationalist and Christian Zionist interpretive systems already treat certain regional and ideological adversaries as participants in larger spiritual or civilizational conflict. When these narratives converge with lobbying and donor networks that emphasize existential risks from infiltration or subversion, they generate resonant patterns that make emergency framing appear continuous with established threat perception rather than exceptional. Intelligence-derived categories of organized networks and foreign-aligned activity provide additional analytical support. The combination creates conditions under which domestic political opposition or unrest can be parsed through categories already carrying heightened significance within aligned constituencies.

### 10.5 Potential Justificatory Frames for Activation

Potential justificatory frames for PEAD activation include assertions of large-scale domestic unrest linked to foreign influence, coordinated disruption of critical infrastructure or electoral processes, or the emergence of organized networks capable of sustained challenge to governmental authority. Each of these frames draws upon categories refined through the intelligence cooperation, lobbying activity, and theological interpretation examined in earlier sections. When domestic enforcement tools such as NPSM-7 or detention expansion have already normalized the application of these categories internally, the step to emergency authorities can be presented as an extension rather than a rupture. The latent architecture therefore includes not only the documents themselves but also the pre-existing justificatory resources that could render their activation politically viable within specific coalitions.

### 10.6 Latent Architecture and Recursive Coupling

The latent architecture of PEADs stands in recursive relationship with the observable incremental mechanisms. Expanded detention capacity, data-access initiatives, and counter-network operations create institutional and informational preconditions that could support emergency measures. Conversely, the standing availability of emergency authorities can exert a

chilling or structuring effect on political behavior even when not invoked. Theological and lobby-mediated narratives participate in this recursion by sustaining the threat perceptions that make both incremental and latent instruments appear necessary. The coupling is not deterministic; it is enabled by the informational and consciousness substrates that align categories across domestic and external domains.

### 10.7 Implications for Corrective Analysis

A corrective analysis must treat PEADs not as a distant or hypothetical endpoint but as an active layer within the multi-domain architecture. The Gephardt-Wirth memorandum correctly identifies the risk that domestic incrementalism could culminate in emergency activation. It does not, however, examine how the justificatory frames for such activation are conditioned by the omitted networks and substrates. By restoring theological infrastructures, lobbying mechanisms, and intelligence-derived categories as participants in the latent architecture, the analysis recovers the fuller set of conditions under which emergency powers become thinkable and potentially activatable. This recovery prepares the ground for synthesizing the layers into a recursive model of the overall architecture.

## 11. Toward a Recursive Model of Power Architecture

The domains examined across the preceding sections—domestic security instruments, pro-Israel lobbying and donor networks, dispensationalist and Christian Zionist theological infrastructures, intelligence cooperation and definitional migration, and informational and consciousness substrates—do not stand in linear or hierarchical relation. They participate in recursive feedback loops in which each layer conditions and is conditioned by the others. The following subsections synthesize these domains into a multi-layered, feedback-rich model and demonstrate its application to the mechanisms identified in the Gephardt-Wirth memorandum.

### 11.1 The Limits of Linear and Single-Domain Models

Linear models treat executive consolidation as a sequence of observable domestic steps whose cumulative effect can be assessed by examining each increment in isolation. Single-domain models confine analysis to institutional or material arrangements within the constitutional order. Both approaches produce coherent but truncated maps. They correctly identify mechanisms such as NPSM-7, detention expansion, and data-access initiatives yet cannot fully account for the political sustainability, definitional portability, or constituency resonance that render those mechanisms durable. The limitation arises because linear and single-domain models lack the capacity to represent feedback across foreign-policy alignments, theological interpretation, and informational patterns that predate and extend beyond any given administration.

### 11.2 Identification of Core Layers

The recursive model identifies four primary layers that interact continuously. The institutional and material layer encompasses formal authorities, bureaucratic capacities, and legal instruments such as presidential memoranda and emergency planning documents. The lobbying and donor network layer includes organized advocacy, campaign finance mechanisms, and access structures that shape legislative and executive priorities. The theological and cultural infrastructure layer comprises interpretive frameworks that generate resonant patterns of threat perception and political obligation. The informational and consciousness substrate layer consists of the recursive patterns of category, narrative, and attention that transmit and stabilize alignments across the other layers. These layers are not exhaustive, but they capture the principal domains whose mutual conditioning has been traced in earlier sections.

### 11.3 Recursive Feedback Mechanisms

Feedback operates through multiple channels. Institutional changes codify categories and authorities that then migrate into informational substrates, altering the patterns available for consciousness-level resonance. Lobbying and donor networks amplify or suppress particular narratives, thereby shaping which institutional changes encounter reduced or heightened political friction. Theological infrastructures supply durable interpretive resources that render certain threat categories intelligible to significant constituencies, lowering the activation cost for both incremental and latent instruments. Intelligence cooperation contributes definitional content that travels across domestic and external domains, enabling the same categories to justify measures in multiple registers. Each channel creates loops in which outputs from one layer become inputs for others, producing path dependence and emergent stability that no single layer can generate on its own.

### 11.4 Mutual Conditioning Across Layers

Mutual conditioning means that no layer functions as an independent variable whose effects can be isolated. Domestic security instruments are conditioned by the availability of justificatory categories supplied through intelligence cooperation and theological interpretation. Lobbying networks are conditioned by the institutional environment that makes certain forms of access and influence low-cost or high-cost. Theological infrastructures are conditioned by the political salience of issues that allow their categories to resonate with contemporary events. Informational substrates are conditioned by the institutional and cultural practices that repeatedly enact particular patterns. The result is a system in which change in any layer alters the conditions of possibility for the others without requiring direct causal chains between them.

### 11.5 Application to the Mechanisms Under Discussion

When the recursive model is applied to the mechanisms identified in the Gephardt-Wirth memorandum, the domestic incremental steps appear as surface manifestations of deeper conditioning. NPSM-7's use of categories such as organized political violence draws upon definitional resources refined through intelligence cooperation and advocacy networks. Detention expansion gains political sustainability from constituencies whose threat perceptions are shaped by theological and cultural infrastructures. Voter data initiatives acquire framing power from the migration of infiltration and integrity categories across domains. The latent availability of PEADs is conditioned by the same substrate patterns that make emergency framing appear continuous with established practice. The model therefore does not replace attention to observable mechanisms; it reveals the recursive conditions that make those mechanisms both feasible and difficult to contest within existing political alignments.

### 11.6 Diagnostic Advantages of the Recursive Model

The recursive model offers several diagnostic advantages over linear or single-domain alternatives. It accounts for the durability of alignments that persist across changes in administration. It explains the portability of categories between foreign and domestic domains without requiring conspiratorial coordination. It integrates the role of consciousness-level resonance in sustaining or resisting particular trajectories. It identifies pressure points—such as voter data initiatives or emergency activation thresholds—where multiple layers converge and where intervention might produce disproportionate effects. Most importantly, it recovers the omitted factors that a domestic-only analysis necessarily brackets, thereby producing a map whose completeness more closely matches the complexity of the architecture under examination.

### 11.7 Transition to Practical Implications

The recursive model provides the synthetic framework required for assessing both the nature of contemporary executive consolidation and the forms of response that might prove effective. It does not yield simple prescriptions, because feedback-rich systems resist single-point interventions. It does, however, identify the layers and couplings that any serious strategy of containment or reform must address. The final section derives the practical and theoretical implications of this model for scholars, institutions, and citizens seeking to navigate the architecture without reproducing the selective framing that has limited prior diagnostics.

## 12. Implications for Analysis, Resistance, and Institutional Design

The recursive model developed across this paper carries consequences for how scholars diagnose power, how institutions are designed or reformed, and how citizens and movements organize response. These consequences follow from the recognition that domestic security instruments, lobbying networks, theological infrastructures, intelligence-derived categories, and informational substrates stand in mutually conditioning relationships rather than in linear sequence. The following subsections derive the implications for each domain of practice while identifying the risks that arise when responses reproduce the selective framing the paper has sought to correct.

### 12.1 Implications for Scholarly Analysis

Scholarly analysis gains diagnostic power when it treats the layers identified in the recursive model as co-constitutive rather than as background or external context. Studies of executive consolidation that remain within institutional or legal registers will continue to produce coherent but incomplete accounts. Research that incorporates lobbying mechanisms, theological interpretation, and informational substrates can trace the conditions under which incremental domestic measures acquire durability and legitimacy. This shift requires methodological openness to recursive causation and to the migration of categories across domains traditionally separated by subfield boundaries. It also requires willingness to treat positionality—both of analysts and of the actors under study—as data rather than as neutral vantage point.

### 12.2 Implications for Institutional Design and Oversight

Institutional design and oversight must address the latent as well as the observable architecture. Congressional and judicial mechanisms calibrated to incremental domestic changes will encounter difficulty when the conditioning factors lie in classified intelligence categories, donor networks, or theological infrastructures that operate outside formal legislative processes. Effective oversight therefore requires expanded capacity to examine cross-domain couplings, including the migration of threat categories and the role of external alignments in shaping domestic enforcement priorities. At the same time, reforms that focus exclusively on one layer—such as restricting emergency authorities or increasing transparency around lobbying—risk displacement effects in which pressure moves to less visible channels. Design that acknowledges recursion can target pressure points where multiple layers converge, such as data-access initiatives or definitional authority over political violence.

### 12.3 Implications for Political Resistance and Coalition Building

Political resistance gains strategic depth when it recognizes that opposition to specific domestic instruments must contend with the broader conditioning environment. Campaigns that treat

incremental measures in isolation may achieve short-term visibility yet leave the recursive supports of those measures intact. Effective resistance therefore requires attention to the networks that supply political sustainability, including donor incentives, constituency resonance, and definitional authority. Coalition building faces the challenge of bridging actors whose primary concerns lie in different layers—civil liberties organizations focused on institutional overreach, critics of foreign-policy alignments, and communities whose theological frameworks shape threat perception. Coalitions that acknowledge these differences without reducing one layer to another can identify shared pressure points while avoiding the fragmentation that selective framing tends to produce.

### 12.4 Implications for Theological and Cultural Engagement

Theological and cultural engagement carries distinctive responsibility because interpretive frameworks participate directly in the informational and consciousness substrates that stabilize or destabilize institutional trajectories. Communities shaped by dispensationalist or Christian Zionist readings can examine how their categories interact with contemporary security language and whether those interactions inadvertently legitimate expansions whose primary effects fall on domestic populations. Engagement need not require abandonment of theological conviction; it requires critical attention to the political consequences of interpretive choices and to the ways in which eschatological or civilizational narratives can be recruited into architectures of consolidation. Such attention can open space for alternative theological resources that emphasize different patterns of obligation and perception.

### 12.5 Implications for Informational and Consciousness Awareness

Awareness of informational and consciousness substrates offers a form of diagnostic and practical capacity that operates at the level of pattern recognition rather than institutional reform alone. Individuals and groups that cultivate sensitivity to the migration of categories, the resonance of threat narratives, and the selective permeability of political systems can identify pressure points and displacement effects more rapidly than those who attend only to formal authorities. This awareness does not substitute for institutional action; it supplies the perceptual resources that make institutional action more precisely targeted. It also provides a basis for resistance that does not depend on capturing formal power but on altering the recursive patterns that sustain particular trajectories.

### 12.6 Risks of Selective or Reductionist Responses

Responses that reproduce the selective framing of the original memorandum risk several characteristic failures. Reduction of the architecture to a single administration or to domestic incrementalism alone can generate alarm that is both justified and strategically misdirected. Campaigns that target one layer while ignoring recursive supports may achieve symbolic

victories that leave the underlying conditioning intact. Conversely, analyses that collapse multiple layers into a single causal story—whether foreign lobby control or theological determinism—lose the capacity to identify leverage points where intervention can produce non-linear effects. The recursive model suggests that effective response requires sustained attention to couplings rather than to isolated mechanisms.

### 12.7 Toward a More Adequate Practice of Diagnosis and Response

A more adequate practice of diagnosis and response begins from the recognition that the architecture under examination is multi-layered and recursive. It treats the mechanisms identified in domestic-focused critiques as real and consequential while insisting that their viability cannot be understood apart from the conditioning layers that the original analysis bracketed. This practice integrates scholarly rigor with institutional attention, political strategy with theological and cultural self-examination, and formal reform with consciousness-level pattern awareness. It does not promise simple solutions, because feedback-rich systems resist reduction to single interventions. It does offer the possibility of responses whose scope more closely matches the scope of the architecture they seek to address. The paper concludes by noting that the adequacy of any such response will be measured not by its rhetorical force but by its capacity to alter the recursive conditions that currently sustain incremental consolidation across multiple domains.

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